we have since seen erected. And the reason is, that the very deficiency of their required knowledge threw the architects on their own mental resources, and rendered them unable, had they been willing, to be copyists.

Now, whatever else we must have, beauty is essential to our art; beauty is its end and aim: but we can only have it on certain conditions; and both Gothic and Classic architect must know and be obedient to those principles and laws of proportion, composition, and the rest, to which Greek and Mediæval succumbed. Some of these form the subject of the following paper. I will take them as they naturally occur to me in the contemplation of an ecclesiastical edifice, to which my remarks more particularly bear reference.

Much of the beauty of Gothic churches depends upon the proportion of spire to tower; but the extreme difference existing in this respect between different buildings, leads me to suspect that no law has been observed in the adjustment of any. A law, however, there certainly must be: let us discover, if we can, what it is. It has ever been my impression that a spire cannot be the mere crowning or finish of a tower, but the principal feature in the composition. I believe that the introduction of a spire degrades the tower to the rank of pedestal, and that the latter must therefore in form and size be adapted to a new office, viz. that of supporting, elevating, and giving dignity to the spire, which, being incomplete in itself, calls for the tower as a basement: in other words, it must be an imperfect tower, i.e. a tower which, divested of its spire, would be seen to be incomplete, that must be associated with the spire. Certain I am that a spire on a complete tower, a tower perfect in its fully developed proportions, that would satisfy the eye as a tower, can never appear anything but an encumbrance to it, a thing to mar its beauty. To give the spire that effect of grandeur of which it is capable, it must be made the chief feature in the group, and be placed on a tower merely to raise it above the roofs of the church. The tower should not be even *equal* in height to the spire: if equal, they must challenge equal attention, and the whole appear disjointed: the eye is directed to the line of junction, and each component part is but secondary in the view. Moreover, when we surmount a tower with a spire, height is henceforth lost upon it; as it is upon the spire the steeple must be dependent for all effect of loftiness and sublimity.

It certainly goes far to lessen the evil of equality, when the upper story of the tower, by breaking out into greater relief, richness, and lightness, by the introduction of windows and buttresses, the pinnacles of which embracing the foot of the spire seem to unite that feature to it, make the lower part of the tower, by its contrasted heaviness, seem a pedestal for the whole.

The principle of proportion I have here suggested, has, I think, been acted upon at Litchfield and at some other churches; and if acted upon to a greater extent in the present day, would be productive of more picturesque and satisfactory piles than we see around us; towers being generally so high as to cause an entire height of steeple disproportioned to the church, and make the steeple appear as a thing not of it. And the defect is not confined to Gothic: even Wren's steeples, some of them, offend in this respect: their diminution does not commence soon enough: there is too much straight tower: if the latter were lower the whole would be better connected with the church, and the spire would be brought into greater union with the body of the building, and give to the composition a more simple and graceful outline. Expressional requirements may be had, I presume, consistent with goodness of composition.

Mr. Ruskin, in treating of proportion, speaks of the pinnacles being the third term to the spire and tower. I believe he is in error here, and that he, as well as Mr. Garbett, mistakes the meaning of the term proportion as generally used by architectural writers and understood by the profession generally. The latter writer quotes Euclid, according to whom proportion is the similitude of ratios, and consists of three terms at least. This is undoubtedly true, but true only of geometrical proportion, or proportion in the geometrical sense of the word. Proportion, in the common or architectural acceptation of the term, simply means, as I believe, the relation of two objects, lines, superficies, or bodies to each other with regard to dimension, and which is governed in architecture by some physical or æsthetic law without reference to the relative sizes of any two other objects, or of one of the former objects to a third. A building may, like many productions of nature, have three, four, or more parts, stories, or what not, in geometrical progression: or there may exist between two buildings a similitude of ratio, i. e. the ratio of their respective parts may be the same; but this is not the proportion meant by architectural writers; for the word is used intelligibly in reference to two parts only, and where no third part exists. We approve of the proportion or relative sizes of two things in many buildings, where certainly no third term can be found: a façade consisting of an order of columns on a rustic basement, or a centre and wing of a building, may have good or bad proportion: the depth of the entablature is undoubtedly well proportioned to the height of the columns in the Parthenon: where is the third term? In short, it will be found that the relative sizes of two things in architecture is founded on the nature of their relationship: the proportion of burden to support, for instance, being determined by a physical law arising out of the nature, strength, and quality of the materials, must vary according to these, and cannot be determined by the ratios of any other two objects, which may have a totally different relation to each other.

The tower being subordinated in the manner described, must be kept heavy and massive: undivided, except in its upper story, where it should break into more numerous parts, to assimilate the better with the spire. Keeping the foundation or basement solid, and confining the light pierced openwork to the summit, is most important: it is in accordance with the method of nature. The foundation, if decorated at all, must only be decorated by such delicate tracery as obviously will not interfere with its strength; while the spire may be pierced and sculptured to any extent, so it be kept broad and simple in outline; affording the greater effect by contrast with the massiveness and weight of its base.

In spires I think a good deal depends upon module,—the ratio of height to base. I believe the spire whose height is about five diameters of the base is in the most graceful proportion,—the Corinthian Order of spires. This height, by the way, being equivalent to ten times the centre diameter, gives a spire so proportioned a somewhat literal claim to be so termed.

The distances between the sculptured bands, or horizontal divisions of a spire, I would increase upwards in a gentle geometrical progression, say as 16, 20, 25. This would give emphasis to the aspiring expression, which should be more intense at the summit.

The proper connection of spire and tower is the point next in importance. Mr. Britton says he sees no beauty in Salisbury spire. Now Salisbury spire I think much like our other spires; but there is certainly a want of beauty in the steeple as a whole; and this arises, I am persuaded, from the mal-connection of its two great components. The whole steeple, though he might have found one far more faulty, is really no very great triumph as a fine-art production. The architect, it is said, was determined to make it the highest in England; and we can scarcely be surprised, that with such an aim he did not make it the most beautiful. There is certainly little feeling exhibited in a perpendicular line one hundred feet high, joined above by an inclined one, one hundred feet more. The chief scope for feeling in such structures consists in adjusting the tower to the harmonious reception of the spire, proportioning the latter to it, and in gracefully joining them together. A tower truly formed to receive a spire, and one built without reference to a spire, are, as I before intimated, very different things. A tower truly built, adapted by successive set-offs to receive a spire, *must* receive a spire, or for ever be imperfect. A spireless tower has most power and effect carried up perpendicularly, like those of Lincoln (west front), Canterbury, or Exeter; but a spire could never unite with such towers. So that, when surmounted by a spire, a tower must partake of the pyramidal and aspiring character,—anticipate, as it were, the diminution of the spire. In some continental examples the tower is so diminished as to bring its sides and those of the spire into almost one plane or gentle curve, giving the perfection of unity. Indeed, in many tower and spire are entirely blended, and present to the eye but one feature and one beautiful curve or outline. While too many in England have tower and spire, or tower, lantern, and spire, which all appear as if made without reference to each other, and then brought together: in these continental examples the parts are so fused, as it were, into one as to be almost lost sight of as distinct features. In spires like that at Antwerp we scarcely discern where one ends and the other begins. In some such examples I will not deny that this principle has been carried to too great an extreme: so far as to the sacrifice of power and the production of monotony.

It should be here observed that a spire does not make good composition unless carried out by other kindred forms, such as pointed gables, turret-roofs, and finials of buttresses, and is most consistent when rising from a cluster of subordinate pinnacles. A great objection to the spire in classic architecture is that in buildings in that style, there are no other pointed features to keep it in countenance, and link it to the body of the church. In this style it stands alone, unsupported, uncalled for, unjustified by other features of the structure; while in the Gothic, on the contrary, the widely distributed pinnacles, nearly equal, and the various points of gables of different heights and sizes, call loudly for one pre-eminent feature of the same character to unite them.

A spire would greatly improve, nay, feed many of our cathedral piles. Every architect who takes an attentive general view of York Minster, must feel the want of a centre spire as a crowning to the noble composition, to give it unity and completeness. What a dome is to a classic pile, I believe the spire is to a Gothic one. To me a spire appears indispensable to a perfect Gothic pile. To say the least, a spire-crowned church has a great advantage over one that is spireless. The spire of Litchfield, I consider, place that cathedral on a level with cathedrals otherwise far superior, and render it a truly noble composition. The great centre spire is really stirring to the imagination; and a feature so striking by its size, form, or position, is of incalculable value in an æsthetic point of view, as the imagination, excited by its image, must colour with its hues every other feature, and magnify more or less the entire structure with which it is connected.

A composition can be made of course that would admit harmoniously a square tower-termination; i.e. sufficient squareness in composition may be observed below in the body of the building: but most Gothic compositions seem to call for the crowning pyramid, or finial presented by the spire. Besides, the spire is more proper expressionally. The aspiring principle is best carried out by it: and it is the most significant and true. A tower having reference to defence, is in the present day meaningless. There is a majesty about our old Norman towers, but they are scarcely of peaceful and ecclesiastical character.

I intimated above that, beyond a certain height, a tower is not only disproportioned to the spire, but causes a disconnection between the spire it bears and the body of the church. This is an important point. We should not only secure a beautiful tower and spire, but we should attend to beauty in the entire composition of church and steeple, which latter should be so placed and so proportioned, that it will have the most intimate union with the mass of the building. To me, all composition seems to want unity where the base-tower goes

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